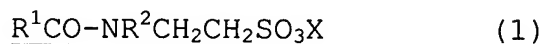


IN THE CLAIMS:

Kindly cancel claims 7, 9, 12 and 15-18, and amend claims 1-6, 8, and 13-14 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A paste or solid cleaning agent composition comprising:

(a) 5-50 mass % of an acyl salt anionic surfactant represented by the following general formula (1):

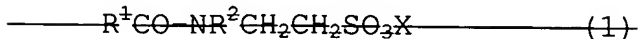


(In this formula, R¹ denotes a hydrocarbon group having 10-24 carbons, R² denotes a hydrogen atom or methyl group, and X denotes an alkali metal, alkali earth metal, ammonium, or organic amine),

(b) ~~one, two or~~ more chosen from inorganic salts, organic acids, and organic salts,

(c) polyethylene glycol, [[and]]

(d) water wherein the total electrolyte molar concentration is 1.8 mol/kg or more, and.



~~(In this formula, R¹ denotes a hydrocarbon group having 10-24 carbons, R² denotes a hydrogen atom or methyl group, and X~~

~~denotes an alkali metal, alkali earth metal, ammonium, or organic amine.)~~

(e) one or more chosen from taurine, N-methyltaurine, and N,N-dimethyltaurine.

2. (Currently Amended) The cleaning agent composition of claim 1, wherein R¹ of the (a) ingredient comprises a lauric acid residue and/or myristic acid residue.

3. (Currently Amended) The cleaning agent composition of claim 1, wherein the organic acid and organic salt of the (b) ingredient is one[[, two]] or more chosen from citric acid, succinic acid, lactic acid, malic acid, glycolic acid, tartaric acid, and acidic amino acids, as well as their salts.

4. (Currently Amended) The cleaning agent composition of claim 1, wherein the molecular weight of the (c) ingredient is 200-1,000.

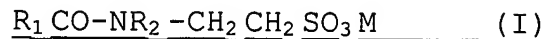
5. (Currently Amended) The cleaning agent composition of claim 1, [[that]] further comprising ~~comprises (e)~~ (f) a nonionic surfactant.

6. (Currently Amended) The cleaning agent composition of claim 5 wherein [[the]] (e) ~~ingredient~~ is [[a]] polyoxyethylene glycerin monoisostearate having a HLB of 10-15.

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Currently Amended) A paste or solid cleaning agent composition having a system melting point of 40° or higher, comprising:

(a) ~~an anionic surfactant~~ one or more long chain acyl taurine salts, having a Kraft point of 40° or lower, represented by the following general formula (I):



(In this formula, R₁ denotes a saturated or unsaturated hydrocarbon group with an average number of carbon atoms of 7-19; R₂ denotes an alkyl group with an average number of carbon atoms of 1-3; and M denotes an alkali metal, alkali earth metal, ammonium, or organic amine or derivative),

(b) one[, two,] or more chosen from inorganic salts and organic salts,

(c) trihydric or higher polyol, [[and]]

(d) water, and

(e) one or more chosen from taurines and nonionic surfactants having a HLB of 10 or more.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Previously Presented) The cleaning agent composition of claim 8 wherein at least one of the constituents of the (b) ingredient is the same type of metal ion salt as the counter ion of the (a) ingredient.

11. (Original) The cleaning agent composition of claim 10 wherein, in the (b) ingredient, the molar ratio of the same type of metal ion salt as the counter ion of the (a) ingredient is one or more to the metal ion salt of types other than the counter ion of the (a) ingredient.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) The cleaning agent composition of claim [[12]] 8, wherein the nonionic surfactant having a HLB of 10 or more, used for the (e) ingredient, is one[[, two]] or more chosen from POE (=polyoxyethylene) glycerin monoisostearate, POE dialkyl ether, and POE hydrogenated castor oil, as well as derivatives thereof.

14. (Currently Amended) The cleaning agent composition of claim [[12]] 8, wherein the melting point of the system is 45° or higher.

15-18. (Cancelled)

19. (Previously Presented) The cleaning agent composition of claim 13 wherein the melting point of the system is 45° or higher.

Kindly add new claims 20-28 as follows:

20. (New) The cleaning agent composition of claim 1, wherein (b), in the presence of (a), (c), (d) and (e), has a melting point of 45° or higher.

21. (New) The cleaning agent composition of claim 1, wherein the composition comprises 1-10 mass% of ingredient (b).

22. (New) The cleaning agent composition of claim 1, wherein the composition comprises 2-40 mass% of ingredient (c).

23. (New) The cleaning agent composition of claim 1, wherein the composition comprises 5-60 mass% of ingredient (d).

24. (New) The cleaning agent composition of claim 5, wherein the composition comprises 0.01-5 mass% of ingredient (f).

25. (New) The paste or solid cleaning agent composition of claim 8, wherein the composition comprises 5 mass% or more of ingredient (a).

26. (New) The paste or solid cleaning agent composition of claim 8, wherein the composition comprises 1-10 mass% of ingredient (b).

27. (New) The paste of solid cleaning agent composition of claim 8, wherein the composition comprises 2-40 mass% of ingredient (c).

28. (New) The paste or solid cleaning agent composition of claim 8, wherein the composition comprises 5-60 mass% of

ingredient (d).